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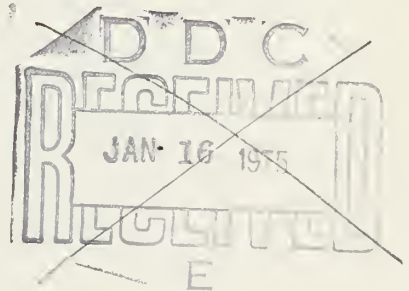
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A STUDY IN SELF-DISCLOSURE AMONG THE
VIETNAM PRISONERS OF WAR

A Thesis
Presented to the
Graduate Faculty of the
School of Human Behavior
United States International University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts
in Human Behavior

by
Paul Henry Schulz
San Diego, 1974



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Chapter 1

PROBLEM FORMULATION AND DEFINITION

A person can make himself known only to the degree that he reveals his innermost feelings, attitudes and values to other individuals. He can reveal himself by verbalizing his feelings and attitudes about a wide variety of relatively intimate topics. (Jourard, 1964, 1971).

One of the leading psychologists who has been interested in certain aspects of "self" is Jourard (1964, 1971). He has stimulated research with his popular book, The Transparent Self, in which he discusses his concept of "self-disclosure." He defined self-disclosure as verbally telling another person what one thinks, feels or wants. Self-disclosure is letting another person know one's real self, as opposed to "pseudo-self-disclosure," in which one pretends to have a thought or feeling in order to gain approval or avoid punishment. (Jourard, 1964:11).

This study was concerned with self-disclosure among the Vietnam Prisoners of War (Vietnam POWs) as it relates to isolation.

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

In early 1973, the Vietnam POWs were released from North Vietnam where they had spent from three months to over eight years in confinement from August, 1964

through March, 1973. During that period the Vietnam POWs were subjected to varying degrees of isolation, both physical and mental.

The time frame involved can be divided into two distinct eras: (1) pre-1969 POW environment, and (2) post-1969 POW environment. This time break marked the change in treatment for the majority of the Vietnam POWs, both physically and psychologically. In addition, it breaks the POWs into two different groups: (1) those captured up to early 1969, and (2) those captured starting with the resumption of the bombing of northern North Vietnam in April 1972.

Although conditions in the prison camps varied considerably, the following description of camp conditions is representative.

The camps were surrounded by high walls and guard towers. The majority of the buildings had thick brick walls, with tile roofs. There were no heating facilities; the POWs were subjected to the outside air temperature, which ranged from almost freezing during the winter months to over 100 degrees in the hot summer. Bathing was from a dirty well or cistern of cold water. Each POW had two cotton blankets, a small rush mat, two sets of long pajama-like uniforms, two sets of underclothing, one pair of rubber tire sandals, one toothbrush and toothpaste, one metal cup and small water pitcher, and a sweatshirt sweater.

Pre-1969 POW Environment

The thick brick-walled buildings used to house the POWs were subdivided to provide small secure rooms, varying in size from 7 x 7 to 15 x 15 feet, with very high ceilings. The windows, if there were any, had been barred and bricked up most of the way. If there were no windows, a couple of small high vent holes about 6 x 8 inches had been cut through the wall. A solitary, bare light burned constantly. The bricking of the windows and open high vents was to prevent the POWs from looking out of the rooms and possibly seeing another POW.

Each of the rooms contained two to four concrete or hard wood pallets, measuring about 3 x 7 feet, many of them equipped with a set of legstocks. They took up the majority of the floor space, leaving very little to move around. There was a "honey-bucket" for human waste disposal which was emptied once each day.

The POWs each spent from one to over forty months living alone and when they did get to have roommates, it varied from one to three until the latter part of 1969. They were not permitted access to the POWs in other rooms. The only mental stimulation was self mental exercise, the interaction with roommates, and propaganda. The propaganda was heard from a speaker in each room for a period of about fifteen minutes once per day; however, on occasion, the speaker would be silent for long periods.

The POWs were not permitted to communicate with

prisoners in the other rooms or buildings. However, despite the captors' efforts to prevent communications, there were clandestine communications networks throughout each camp which functioned daily. Even the majority of the POWs who were living solo (alone without a roommate) were in communication with other POWs and knew what was occurring throughout the camp.

The POWs were harassed constantly and tortured frequently for such things as communicating with another prisoner, having unauthorized items in the room which the guard had placed there, and a myriad of other insignificant reasons the camp personnel devised. The forms of torture were as varied as the reasons for receiving it. Much of the severe torture was carried out to obtain military information, confessions of war crimes, anti-war statements to United States government officials, and personal biographical data as to family and finances.

Food was served twice a day. It consisted of a thin soup made of greens, cabbage, or pumpkin the majority of the time with a couple of pieces of pork fat for flavoring. A small loaf of low quality French bread or rice, and a pitcher of boiled water were included. In addition, for most of the meals a small portion of cooked vegetables, sugar, or fat was served in a side dish. The same type of food would be served every meal for days or even weeks at a time.

Post-1969 POW Environment

The end of 1969 marked the start of changes which led to better living conditions. The rooms were enlarged, many received roommates, the POWs were permitted out for a little sun and exercise, and some card and chess games began to appear. The torture subsided and the quantity and quality of food increased. The circulation of a few magazines and Vietnamese and Russian books commenced.

Up until then, few Vietnam POWs were permitted to write or receive mail from home. The majority were now permitted to write, many for the first time since their capture several years earlier. The receipt of mail did improve, but at its best it was extremely sparse.

Packages from home were permitted for the first time in 1969. Even though families were permitted to mail them at a regular rate, only a small percentage were received by the POWs.

By the end of 1970, the bricks were removed from the windows, rooming arrangements were increased to five to 15 men to a room, and permission was given to mix with men in other rooms. Shortly thereafter, the move to Camp Unity with its large rooms measuring approximately 25 x 30-60 feet occurred, and 30 to 58 POWs were assigned per room. This combining of more POWs to a room led to the self-developed educational programs and the receipt of very limited writing materials for education and mental stimulation.

It is said that the most powerful determiners of self-disclosure are the identity of the person to whom one might disclose himself, and the nature and purpose of the relationship between the participants. (Jourard, 1971:65). Surely the nature and purpose of the relationship between the Vietnam POWs was an episode fairly unique in the annals of human history and ideal for a study in the area of self-disclosure as it relates to the environmental influences of isolation, both physical and mental.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Jourard stated that the accurate portrayal of the self to others is an identifying characteristic of a healthy personality, while neurosis is related to the inability to know one's "real self" and to make it known to others. (Jourard, 1971:3). There is a need for improved psychological health in our society. In particular there is a felt need for more self-disclosure today as a result of the higher levels of complexity which help produce more neurosis. Self-disclosure is a means by which one can achieve personality health. (Jourard, 1971:32).

It has been said that while simple honesty with others (and thus oneself) may produce scars, it is likely to be an effective preventative of both mental illness and certain kinds of physical health problems. (Jourard, 1971:133). Schmale found that 41 out of 43 patients admitted to a general hospital during a 23-day period had a

disruption in their relationships with a significant other just prior to the onset of their various diseases.

(Jourard, 1971:75). There are beliefs that one's attitude towards life and self are factors both in the onset of illness and in the recovery therefrom. (Jourard, 1971; Frankl, 1959).

The factors which influence a person's self-disclosure have just begun to be studied under various conditions of social isolation in controlled or manipulated situations with discomfort at a minimal level and in which the groups knew what the maximum duration of confinement would be. (Altman, Taylor, and Wheeler, 1973:39).

In essence, there exists a lack of research in the area of self-disclosure as it relates to isolation among prisoners of war, where the degree of isolation is quite different from the majority of studies and the maximum duration of confinement is unknown.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to examine the affects the number of roommates and the availability of mental stimulants had on the level of self-disclosure among the Vietnam POWs incarcerated in North Vietnam during the period from August, 1964 through March, 1973. The major objective of the study was to relate the depth of POW self-disclosure to the degree of POW isolation.

HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses tested in the study were:

H₁: There is a positive correlation between degree of physical isolation and level of self-disclosure.

H₂: There is a difference in level of self-disclosure as it relates to mental isolation (i.e., stimulated versus nonstimulated).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

It is known that self-disclosure between men reduced the mystery that one man is for another. Under what conditions will man make his mysteries subjectively available to the perception of others and to what level? (Jourard, 1971:20).

In a recent study of male dyads in social isolation with no outside contact for a period of about ten days, it was found that isolated subjects had a higher level of self-disclosure than non-isolated subjects. (Altman and Haythorn, 1965). In addition, a similar study was conducted, but this time the degree of mental isolation (stimulation) was also varied. The results demonstrated that isolated nonstimulated subjects exhibited increasingly greater amounts of disclosure than those with stimulation. This increasing of disclosure was caused by the increased need for a deeper interpersonal relationship as a result of the higher degree of isolation, both mental and physical. (Altman, Taylor, and Wheeler, 1971).

The Vietnam POWs were confined alone or in small groups in small rooms for extended periods, with no stimulation in the period of time prior to 1970, and in larger groups (up to 58) with limited stimulation thereafter, providing an ideal background for a study in self-disclosure.

The rationale of this study was that self-disclosure levels among the Vietnam POWs were affected to a large degree by the amount of isolation, both physical (number of roommates) and/or mental (nonstimulation). Further, the underlying rationale assumes that the perceptions of the POWs can be retroactively measured and are indeed valid.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

It was felt that the data obtained from this type of study would significantly add to the previous and continuing work in the area of self-disclosure under various conditions of social isolation. The findings should assist in therapeutic situations where there is a need for self-disclosure as evidenced by the request for all data by the Center for Prisoner of War Studies. They indicated such data will be utilized in their long range study of the Vietnam POWs.¹

¹Personal conversation with Dr. Hunter at the Center for Prisoner of War Studies, Navy Medical Neuropsychiatric Research Unit, San Diego, California.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The emphasis of the study was on showing the relationship of isolation and stimulation to the level of self-disclosure among the Vietnam POWs. The study employed an invited sample of American servicemen held as POWs during the period of time from August, 1964 through March, 1973. The greater majority of aircrews were commissioned officers from the Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force. Therefore, generalizations of the findings can only be made to the officers of those services. Generalization of the findings to other groups must be with caution.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Vietnam POW: For the purpose of this study this term was used to mean those aircrew members captured in North Vietnam only, and who were released following the signing of a peace agreement. To avoid controversy, the POWs who were charged with misconduct or released early were not included in the invited sample.

Confinement: For the purpose of this study, confinement meant "shut-in" or restricted to a given physical boundary within which the individual must function (i.e., sleep, eat, remain) for some period of time.

Isolation: Refers to a condition imposed upon individuals "confined."

Physical isolation: In this study, physical isolation was measured by the number of roommates (the fewer the number of roommates, the higher the degree of isolation).

Mental isolation (stimulation): In this study, mental isolation meant the deprivation of stimulants (i.e., books, letters, playing cards, games, writing materials, etc.). The term "stimulation" is used as a synonym for mental isolation.

Self-disclosure: The act of deliberately making oneself known to another person by voluntarily telling the other person things about oneself which the other person is unlikely to know or to discover from other sources. Self-disclosure was measured by a questionnaire developed by the researcher with items extracted from several questionnaires developed by Jourard and others (1971).

ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

Chapter 1 has been devoted to an introduction of the study including a statement of the hypotheses to be tested. Chapter 2 is a review of literature related to mental health, self-disclosure and social isolation and their inter-relationships. Both theoretical material and research studies are reviewed. One section is devoted to literature regarding Vietnam POWs. The methods and procedures of the study are presented in Chapter 3, and

the findings are reported in Chapter 4. A summary of the study, significant conclusions and discussion appear in Chapter 5.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of the current and relevant literature, both theoretical and research, associated with the various aspects of self-disclosure and isolation necessary to provide a basis for understanding the framework of the study. Five main subject areas are developed in the review and presented here:

(1) theoretical background, (2) solitary isolation, (3) related Vietnam POW literature, (4) measurement of self-disclosure, and (5) related research studies.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This section discusses theory relative to the various concepts of self-disclosure. It is broken down into two sections: (1) man's needs and health; and (2) interpersonal relationships, self-disclosure, and health.

Man's Needs and Health

It is proper that this review began with a look at the hierarchy of man's basic needs as developed by Maslow. In ascending order he lists them as physiological needs (life maintenance), safety needs (security), belongingness and love needs, esteem needs (respect and self-respect), and the need for self-actualization.

(Maslow, 1954:91).

Maslow describes these basic needs as being found in a hierarchy of prepotency, that is, only when one is substantially satisfied can you move on to the next. (Maslow, 1954:98-100). For example: a person who is staying alive by finding food and water is meeting a physiological need; the person who in addition has a rifle and a hidden cave with a secure entrance is meeting the need for safety; the person that in addition to meeting the previous two needs has others with him is meeting the need of belonging; etc. This is not only a series of increasing need gratifications but is, as well, a series of increasing degrees of psychological health. It is clear, other things being equal, a man who is safe and belongs and is loved will be healthier than a man who is safe and belongs, but is rejected and unloved. It follows that need gratification is positively correlated with the degree of psychological health. (Maslow, 1954:115).

The scholar and psychiatrist, Viktor E. Frankl, in his writings, argues that unless a man can see "meaning" and value in his continuing existence, his morale will deteriorate, and his immunity will decrease, and he may even commit suicide. (Frankl, 1959).

This same idea is discussed by another author, Jourard, who develops it in the sense that most of the satisfactions which make life worth while (have meaning) in fact can be gratified only in relation to or with the cooperation of other people and a person will choose as a

friend that individual whose characteristics satisfy his varied needs. (Jourard, 1958). Man is dependent upon his fellows for many vital satisfactions; he needs the help and responsiveness of others in order to cope with life's problems and to produce or maintain his sense of security, self-esteem, and identity. (Jourard, 1958:302).

It can be theorized from the foregoing that every human being possesses a hierarchy of basic needs and that to fulfill these needs, give meaning to his being, and promote physical and psychological health, an interpersonal relationship with other human beings is necessary. Just how this interpersonal relationship should be conducted to achieve the desired results is a crucial issue and will be discussed next.

Interpersonal Relationship, Self-Disclosure, and Health

Man's behavior is visible. His inner self is not. Through direct and uncontrived disclosure we can begin to unveil the mystery that one man is for another. Yet, we conceal our inner selves to be safe from criticism, ridicule and rejection. When a man does not acknowledge to himself and to others who he is, when he hides his inner self behind a wall of pretense, he is estranged equally from himself and from society. (Jourard, 1971).

In his book The Acquaintance Process, Newcomb (1961) explains the acquaintance-like process as occurring upon the face-to-face encounter of two or more human beings. He goes on to explain that the growth of the interpersonal relationships of attraction stabilize as individuals cease to acquire new information about each other.

Maslow, in his discussion of basic human needs, pointed out that these basic needs are mostly satisfied in interaction with other human beings. That satisfying these basic needs improves him, not only in character, but in his face-to-face relationship as well. It can be said that this strengthens his interpersonal behavior. (Maslow, 1954:118, 306).

Another scholar who is very interested in the area of interpersonal behavior is Jourard. He identified the characteristics of a healthy personal relationship as: know each other as distinct individuals; like more traits in the other person than you dislike; desire to see happiness and growth in the other person; behave so as to promote happiness and growth in the other person; communicate effectively and make yourself known; be reasonable in your demands on the other; and value and respect the autonomy and individuality of the other. (Jourard, 1958: 312).

In his book On Becoming a Person, Rogers offered a hypothesis to explain what makes any relationship a growth-promoting one. Central to his hypothesis is the concept of "congruence." (Rogers, 1961:30). Congruence is the accurate "matching of experience, awareness and communications." The hypothesis is:

The more that Y experiences the communications of X as a congruence of experience, awareness and communication, the more the ensuing relationship will involve: a tendency toward reciprocal communications with a quality of increasing congruence; a tendency

toward more mutually accurate understanding of the communications; improved psychological adjustment and functioning in both parties; mutual satisfaction in the relationship. (Rogers, 1961:339).

Rogers (1961) emphasized that being congruent in communication involves a risk in a relationship because of the possibility of rejection. The decision, from moment to moment in a relationship, whether to take this risk establishes the direction the relationship will go.

Relating Jourard's (1964) concept of self-disclosure to Rogers' (1961) idea of congruence, one would say that self-disclosure occurs when one's awareness of his experiencing is congruent with his verbal and non-verbal communication. For Jourard (1964), self-disclosure is both a characteristic of the healthy personality and a means of attaining a healthy personality. Jourard (1964: 30) agreed with Rogers' (1961) view of what constitutes a growth-promoting relationship.

Jourard describes an interpersonal behavior as healthy when it expresses the individual's real self, is effective in producing satisfaction, and is congruent with the limits set by conscience and other parties. (Jourard, 1958:302). He further noted that honest self-disclosure between persons is the most direct means by which they can come to know one another as distinct persons. In a healthy interpersonal relationship, mutual self-disclosure will be untrammelled, free and spontaneous. (Jourard, 1958: 341).

He further stated that the most powerful determiners

of self-disclosure thus far discovered are the identity of the person to whom one might disclose himself and the nature and purpose of the relationship between the people. Disclosure of one's experiences is most likely to occur when the other person is perceived as a trustworthy person of good will and/or one who is willing to disclose his experiences to the same depth and breadth. (Jourard, 1971:65).

In this same light Pearce and Sharp (1973:417) noted that individuals are highly selective in choosing persons to whom to disclose and that the number of communications in the transaction affects the probability of the development of a high level of disclosure. In addition, self-disclosure occurs slowly, increasing as the relationship becomes more stable and permanent. It was shown that disclosure co-varied with the amount of time same sex peers spent together.

Various writers have identified individuals' ability and willingness to self-disclose as determinants of their personal health and satisfaction. Jourard offered the opinion, "Every maladjusted person is a person who has not made himself known to another human being and in consequence does not know himself." (Jourard, 1964: 26). The maladjusted person resorts to "pseudo-self-disclosure" to avoid being known by others. If a person has disclosed only aspects of himself that have low intimacy value, such as his favorite kind of food or his favorite sport, then he is not really known by another

being. (Jourard, 1964). When we succeed in hiding our being from others we tend to lose touch with our real selves. This loss of self contributes to illness in its myriad forms.

While simple honesty with others (and thus to one-self) may produce scars, it is likely to be an effective preventative of both mental illness and certain kinds of physical sickness. Honesty can literally be a health insurance policy. (Jourard, 1971:133).

The literature points out: (1) the need for face-to-face confrontation in the development of an interpersonal relationship; (2) for the relationship to grow requires self-disclosure which is congruent; (3) to have healthy interpersonal behavior it must express the individual's real self; (4) the nature and purpose of the relationship are two of the most powerful determiners of self-disclosure; and (5) true self-disclosure promotes positive mental and physical health.

In summary, it can be theorized from the foregoing that every human being possesses a hierarchy of basic needs. To fulfill those needs, give meaning to his being, and promote health, both physical and psychological, an interpersonal relationship with other human beings is necessary.

This interpersonal relationship requires: (1) face-to-face confrontation for its development, (2) self-disclosure which is congruent, and (3) the individual express his real self. The nature and purpose of the relationship are two of the most powerful determiners of

self-disclosure, and true self-disclosure promotes positive mental and physical health.

The foregoing theory and concepts are directly related to the hypotheses of the study and the theoretical framework for the study. A review of the environmental conditions under which the Vietnam POWs had to exist displays how important these were to their existence and ultimate survival.

SOLITARY ISOLATION

Many accounts of experiences, perceptions, behaviors, and feelings of individuals who have experienced long periods of isolation have been widely circulated. The reports of Admiral Byrd and General Dean are well known. Their autobiographical accounts are classic examples of reactions to the stress of isolation. Both men possessed the psychological nature to withstand severe stress and hardship. In general, it was evident that the two men experienced the following: (1) a need for external world stimuli, and (2) a need for someone to validate their impressions and to confirm or debate their thoughts for purposes of maintaining mental balance. (Byrd, 1935).

Prisoner of war accounts and studies of inmates under various degrees of isolation and confinement are extensive. In his book The Gulag Archipelago, Solzhenitsyn (1973) related his experiences in the prisons of Russia in the early 1900's. He described the cells as

stone, unheated cubicles, and the food as being bread and broth. Relating to his first roommate after his initial isolation, he stated:

But out of all cells the first one in which you encountered others like yourself is the most special one. Those who shared with you the floor and air of that stone cubicle during those days you rethought your entire life.

It was not the odor of the latrine bucket or the dirty cell that you loved but those fellow prisoners you shared those cells with.

You were alive again and with friends where reason returned to you. Now for the first time you were with others who were traveling your road and whom you could join to yourself with the joyous word "we."

I could from the very beginning of our acquaintance completely disclose my most precious depths and secrets. . . . Thus it was I got through eight years of imprisonment. . . . (Solzhenitsyn, 1973:185-186).

In Korean prison camps, the use of isolation to prevent prisoners from validating their beliefs through interaction with others was a powerful tool for introducing a state of suggestibility. This condition of solitary isolation also existed in the North Vietnam Prisoner of War camps and has been well documented in numerous mass media publications and journals, not to mention the books authored by returned Korean and Vietnam POWs. The Vietnam POW literature as it relates to stress, confinement, roommates, mental stimulation and living conditions, is the next area to be reviewed.

RELATED VIETNAM POW LITERATURE

One would have to go far to find an adult who is not aware of the conditions which prevailed in the prisons of North Vietnam that were used to confine the American Vietnam POWs. Upon and following the release of the POWs, the mass news media of the United States and other nations gave widespread coverage to their release and reported detailed stories of the treatment and living conditions the POWs had experienced.

A review of the literature points out the uniqueness and extreme severity of the forms of isolation the Vietnam POW had been subjected to.

There have been a number of books published which were authored by returned Vietnam POWs and numerous others are still to be published. The testimony of every individual POW is in print somewhere. The present writer has not only had access to these materials, he is personally acquainted with a majority of the POWs and was himself a Vietnam POW for over five years. Although some subjectivity in the report presented here is inevitable, every effort has been made to obtain objective data and to report as objectively as possible.

Captain Howard Rutledge, himself a Vietnam POW and author, wrote:

In truth, as the total experience was unique, so too were the treatment, conditions, and perceptions different and unique for the individual POW. In many cases commonality ends with all being

American uniformed airmen having been shot down, captured, and returned under the same agreements. (Rutledge, 1974:28).

Solitary Confinement

The long periods of time which the Vietnam POWs were confined alone (solitary), some as long as approximately four years, is unique in the history of wars.

POWs felt that "solitary" was the most difficult portion of the prison experience. Colonel Risner, after spending an extended period of time living alone in a dark room, wanted to cry out:

I'll do whatever you want me to. Just take me out of this black room and give me someone to talk to. I prayed. I ran. I exercised. I hollered and I cried, but I did not capitulate. (Risner, 1973:180).

Others, such as Commander Shuman, commented that he prayed for someone to talk to. (Rowan, 1973:146). Captain Chesley, USAF, said that during his long period of isolation he prayed constantly for a roommate and finally was blessed with one, after being alone from April, 1966, to November, 1967. (Chesley, 1973:24, 31). And Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Robert Stirm, in an interview, stated no man was designed to live alone, out of communication. (Rowan, 1973:173).

Commenting on what he overheard an ill POW say, Captain Howard Rutledge wrote:

Ron argued loudly to stay with his friends. All he wanted was a roommate. After months of solitary confinement, he needed to talk to someone. (Rutledge, 1973:63).

This POW, by the name of Ron Storz, was reported by the North Vietnamese government as having died in captivity (possibly from loneliness?).

Roommates

How was it when a POW was finally moved in with another human being after living alone for varying lengths of time? Colonel Risner, after having been alone in a dark cell for many months, finally moved into a room with lights and another man. He wrote:

Swede had been in solitary confinement in a dark room for eighteen months. We talked for two days and nights until we were so hoarse we could hardly whisper. (Risner, 1973:191).

.
I told him my feelings about things. . . .
(Risner, 1973:154).

Commander Crayton made the comment:

There's a tremendous psychological advantage to being in communication--having someone else to lean on and talk to--someone else to discuss things with. (Rowan, 1973:173).

Captain Howard Rutledge recalls two different places in his book, how it was to receive a roommate after having spent an extended period of time in solitary confinement:

But after four years, to shake his hand and know that when the turnkey walked away, I would be face-to-face with another human being--and not alone--was something else. (Rutledge, 1973:67).

.
For eighteen months I had experienced only snatches of covert conversations with anyone. He, too, had suffered under silence. The results were hilarious. We talked nonstop for three days and nights. In seventy-two hours of conversation, you can learn a lot about a man. (Rutledge, 1973:52).

Commander Koskey summed it all up in an interview, when he said: "We learned to love each other." (Rowan, 1973:153).

Mental Stimulation

What did the POWs do to help keep the mind active and pass the time? This was accomplished in a myriad of ways too numerous to mention here. However, a quick look at what some of the POWs had to say about mental stimulation is necessary.

Commander C. D. Clower, in an interview, commented on mental health by stating:

I cannot over-emphasize how important these things are. Next to food, clothing and shelter, the most important thing is something to occupy the mind.
(Rowan, 1973:232).

Writing on how the POW occupied his mind and time while in solitary confinement, Colonel Risner indicated it was accomplished by watching insects, lizards, rats, birds, spiders, ants, etc., or peeking through a tiny crack to watch what was going on around the camp. In addition, a scheduled routine for the day would be followed, including exercise, prayer, relaxing, time for what little communications could be accomplished, and time for mental thought.
(Risner, 1973:193-198).

Lieutenant Ralph Gaither, in describing what they used to write with clandestinely in the days when the captors would not permit any writing materials of any kind, said:

We wrote on the floor of our cells with rocks.
Our ink in those days was made from brick dust

or soup, in later days from coffee or whitewash.
(Gaither, 1973:105).

Air Force Captain Chesley writes:

. . . our hunger for knowledge was almost as great
as our hunger for food. . . . (Chesley, 1973:74).

.
How else did we occupy our time in prison? We
talked with roommates. . . . We shared whatever
knowledge we had brought with us. We shared our
thoughts. (Chesley, 1973:69).

.
When we were put into the big room in November,
1970 it made a tremendous difference. Now we had
far greater opportunities to pass the time profitably.
Among other things we set up an educational program
which would tap the knowledge sources of the forty-
eight men in the room. (Chesley, 1973:75).

He goes on to note that, in time, they received their first
writing material and a couple of magazines from their
captors. (Chesley, 1973:117).

Living Conditions

Conditions such as food, rooms, facilities and
daily routine varied somewhat from camp to camp. Captain
Allen Brady, shot down in January, 1967, said:

Life was spartan, to say the least. The food
was bad; it was cold as hell; we were underdressed.
We continued to stay isolated, although I had a
roommate. There was no outside time. The first
time I got outside to get a little sunshine and
exercise was in the late spring of 1969. (Rowan,
1973:194).

They did not have much the first years from 1964
until 1970. Just two sets of pajama-like prison suits,
two thin cotton blankets, a small rush mat, a drinking
cup, a honey bucket, rubber tire sandals, toothbrush and
toothpaste which had to last for months, a low grade
bar of soap that had to last two months, cold water baths,

and most important of all, a mosquito net. (Rutledge, 1973; Chesley, 1973). "Most of what we ate I considered inedible before prison. . . ." (Rutledge, 1973:71).

The rooms varied from small 7 x 7 foot to 15 x 15 foot ones containing from two to four wooden or concrete pallets for beds, with little or no ventilation and high ceilings in the first years to large 25 x 60 foot ones in November, 1970. (Risner, 1973; Chesley, 1973; Rutledge, 1973; Gaither, 1973; and Rowan, 1973).

Camp Faith housing consisted of a converted army barracks. Walls had been built around the camp to a height of sixteen feet. . . . For the first time in almost five years I got more food than I could eat. (Gaither, 1973:113).

Moving then, in September of '71, was a big move up for all of us. It was the first time in six years I had been in a cell with an open window--there were bars, but it was a window. It wasn't dark in that cell, and now and then breezes made breathing bearable. In fact, often in the daytime we were allowed into a small 12 x 12 foot courtyard area for two or three hours a day; for the first time in 75 months I felt the sunshine on my face . . . but I could look up past those walls and see the sun. It was a glorious sight. (Rutledge, 1973:82-83).

The deprivation of food had a great effect on the fulfillment of those basic needs described by Maslow (1954). In the years from 1964 through 1969 the diet was very meager and most of the POWs suffered large weight losses. They survived but they underwent severe hunger for a long time until late 1969 when the quantity rose to almost double by 1973.

The POW literature provides similar descriptions by most of the early POWs.

I was hungry one hundred percent of the time. I dreamed of food every single night, all night long. . . . Dream or not, I needed more food and there was no way to get it. (Risner, 1973:99).

We were put on a low quality rice diet, with thin soup . . . hunger pains became a way of life. (Gaither, 1973:28).

I lost 60 pounds in weight, most of it in three to four months. Since the meals contained little or no meat content, they digested in two or three hours. It is impossible for a person living under normal circumstances in the United States to really understand what it means to be undernourished and hungry. . . . It cannot be described--only experienced. (Chesley, 1973:45-46).

I never really felt full the entire seven years in Vietnam. (Rutledge, 1973:34).

For those shot down after 1969, prison life was a much different experience than it had been for more than 300 other POWs captured earlier. They were threatened but not tortured as the earlier ones. There was adequate food and there was medical treatment. There were times of the day when they could get together in fresh air to talk or play games. There were a few books and magazines available for reading. There were paper and pencils available to use in learning or designing that dream house.

In summary, it is clear that the Vietnam POW was subjected to severe isolation, both physical and mental, undergoing a variety of living situations. In addition to the isolation, he was subjected to inhuman physical abuses, hunger and an almost complete lack of medical attention. The list of stresses and strains brought to bear would be too long to list here. Their drive to maintain links of communication and human contact, the

will to resist, and the establishment of bonds of love and trust were the key to their survival.

MEASUREMENT OF SELF-DISCLOSURE

The primary instrument used in this study was developed from the Appendix in Jourard's book, Self-Disclosure: An Experimental Analysis of the Transparent Self, in which a number of questionnaires are presented. In the Preface to the book, Jourard wrote:

The Appendix contains questionnaires that were employed in studies reported here. Researchers will find these useful either in the form in which they are shown, or modified to suit their particular purposes. I hereby grant permission to investigators who wish to use our measuring devices for their research; it will not be necessary to write for permission. (Jourard and others, 1971:vi).

The researcher utilized a bank of questions drawn from four questionnaires presented by Jourard and others (1971) to develop an instrument which would gather the required data and meet the needs of the present research. The questions utilized were equally divided among low, medium, and high intimacy items.

A review of the background of the questionnaires utilized in construction of the research instrument is presented here as support for the appropriateness of the instrument developed for the present study.

The first questionnaire drawn upon was a reliable instrument for the assessment of self-disclosure developed by Jourard and Lasakow (1958). Groups of both sexes, white and black, married and unmarried, were tested with the

questionnaire for extent of self-disclosure of six different aspects of self to various target-persons--mother, father, male friend, female friend, and/or spouse. The findings showed: (1) subjects varied the amount of disclosure with respect to the category of information to which an item about self belonged, giving rise to high and low disclosure areas; and (2) whites disclosed more than blacks, and females more than males.

The second questionnaire was developed by Jaffe (1969) and the third by Small (1970) to study reactive effects of the experimenter on subject self-disclosure. The topics were similar to the other questionnaires discussed in this section, but they had a larger percentage of personality topics. Each topic was rated for its intimacy value by the subjects. Topics were classified either high, medium or low intimacy value.

The last questionnaire consisted of twenty topics compiled by Resnick (1970) from topics used by Taylor and Altman (1966) and Drag (1968). They had been rated by college students for their intimacy values, either high, medium or low.

It is known that many people are reluctant to disclose the specifics of personal disclosures, so the technique of simply asking subjects to indicate their extent of self-disclosure on particular subjects is employed. In short, the subject is asked only to make a judgement or estimate the degree to which he has let

others know him, thus reducing the threatening effect of relating the facts of intimate disclosures. (Jourard and others, 1971:101).

It is relevant to mention here that Jourard lists several findings which are noteworthy, such as: (1) there are large individual differences in self-disclosure scores, (2) various groups have characteristic levels of self-disclosure, (3) readiness to be self-disclosing was found to be a factor in interpersonal attraction, and (4) there are wide differences in persons' readiness to disclose various kinds of personal data. (Jourard and others, 1971:101-102).

The reliability and validity of research instruments are important factors. In this regard Jourard presented evidence that the self-disclosure tests from which the investigator selected the items for the research questionnaire utilized in this study have "construct" and "concurrent" validity. The book further presented results of various studies which demonstrate the predictive validity of self-disclosure questionnaires. (Jourard and others, 1971). The reliability coefficients for the questionnaire utilized were high, ranging from .85 to the low .90's. (Jourard and others, 1971).

Drag (1968) showed that a "willingness to self-disclose" questionnaire predicted actual disclosure to an impersonal experimenter and to a fellow-subject. Resnick (1970) paired subjects who scored high on

self-disclosure questionnaires with each other, and she paired low scorers with each other. The high-disclosure pairs actually disclosed more to each other than the low-disclosure pairs. Results from the studies of Small (1970), Graham (1970) and Drag (1971) also provide evidence for predictive validity of self-disclosure questionnaires. (Jourard and others, 1971).

RELATED RESEARCH STUDIES

This section of the review presents the results of previous studies which bear upon the topics of: (1) social isolation and stress, (2) self-disclosure, and (3) self-disclosure in isolation.

Social Isolation and Stress

Haythorn, Altman and Myers (1966) conducted a study of stresses caused by isolation. Thirty-six men were used as subjects in dyads, half under conditions of isolation and half as a control group. Dyads were organized to satisfy a 3 x 3 Greco-Latin square design on the four personality characteristics of need achievement, need affiliation, need dominance and dogmatism. Isolated dyads lived and worked in a small room for ten days with minimal outside contact. Controls slept and ate in regular Navy facilities, but followed the same task and work schedules as the isolated groups. Results confirmed that (1) social isolation is stress-inducing, and (2) stress is a function of interpersonal needs, indicating the importance of group

composition to functioning in an isolated environment, and perhaps to other stressful situations.

As a follow-up, Altman and Haythorn (1967) conducted a study to examine social activity and "territoriality" behavior for beds, areas of the room, and chairs in socially isolated and non-isolated dyads. Nine dyads lived in a small room for ten days, with no outside contact. Matched controls followed the same schedule, but had access to other people and outside facilities. The results indicated that conditions of social isolation led to a gradual increase in territorial behavior and a general pattern of social withdrawal.

Again Taylor, Altman, and Kushner (1969) examined (1) personality factors relating to or predictive of endurance and adjustment to social isolation, and (2) personality and/or perceptual changes occurring under varying conditions of social isolation. Pairs of men were confined for eight days in small rooms without recreational materials of any kind and a minimal work schedule. Multiple conditions of isolation were affected by a factorial combination of mission length expectation, stimulation, and privacy. Diets consisted of liquid food, survival crackers, and water. Lights remained on at all times. Half the groups had separate rooms at their disposal; the other half lived in one room. The study demonstrated that combinations of social isolation yield varying degrees of stress and produce perceptual changes

related to personality functioning. Good adjustment was associated with flexibility, low sociopathy, and ability to be aggressive and angry yet not hostile.

A previous study by Taylor, Wheeler, and Altman (1968) confined pairs of men under experimentally manipulated factorial combinations of mission-length expectation, stimulation, and privacy. In half the groups, subjects had separate rooms at their disposal; the other half lived in one room. Those in the non-stimulated condition heard no other human voice but those in the stimulated condition received verbal instructions, had to make reports, and received five-minute broadcasts of rock-and-roll music and other news information. Those in isolation, non-stimulated, experienced the highest levels of stress. It was noted that if the length of isolation is anticipated to be long, living apart from the other person (even with free access to him) is associated with higher levels of stress. The study indicated that intra- and interindividual pacing processes (e.g., regular exercise schedule, eating period, recreation period, and rest period) may be central theoretical constructs related to adaptation to isolation environments. By regulating social and individual life activities in a balanced way, by living in a longer-term time perspective than the present, and by attuning oneself to the total ecology of the situation, the adjustment to such situations may be enhanced.

These studies point out that: (1) stress is a

function of interpersonal needs; (2) isolation produces "territoriality" and social withdrawal; (3) the degree of isolation and stimulation bear directly upon the level of stress produced; (4) living in one room rather than several with access to others is best under long-term isolation; and (5) establishing an intra- and interindividual pacing process helps in adapting to the isolation environment.

Self-Disclosure Studies

As stated earlier in this chapter, Jourard (1964) agreed with Rogers (1961) that a growth-promoting relationship is characterized by congruence, accepting attitude, and understanding. Jourard (1958) studied the relationship between self-disclosure and liking with the faculty of a nursing college. Nine women were interviewed and asked to which of their colleagues they had disclosed information about themselves. Disclosures regarding fifteen different matters were investigated. The subjects were also asked to tell what information they knew of their colleagues on the same items. Liking for a colleague was determined by asking who was liked best as a close friend. The results showed that subjects tended to disclose more to colleagues they liked best than those not as well-liked. Amount of disclosure and information about another tended to be mutual between members of pairs.

Jourard (1964) duplicated the above study with a group of nine male graduate students. In contrast to

females, the males in this study showed almost no relationship between disclosure and liking. The pairing effect showing a correlation between knowing and disclosing output was evident, and it was even stronger in males than it had been with the females.

Hemelstein and Lubin (1966, in Jourard and others, 1971) administered a modified self-disclosure questionnaire to 95 unmarried males and 85 females who had both parents living and in the home. The results indicated that females disclose more than males, a finding consistent with an earlier finding of Jourard and Lasakow (1958).

Worthy, Gary, and Kohen (1969) conducted a study in exchange of disclosure, utilizing 48 unmarried female undergraduates. The subjects were placed in groups of four to be administered certain disclosure questionnaires over a period of time in which they were permitted to become acquainted and get to know each other. It was found that the intimacy of disclosures exchanged tended to follow the norm of reciprocity. More intimate initial disclosures were made to those who were initially better liked and final liking was higher for those who made more intimate disclosures.

These studies on self-disclosure point out several trends: (1) females were generally higher disclosers than men; (2) liking another person seemed to affect disclosure by females, but it did not affect disclosure by males; (3) amount of disclosure to another

person and information about that person tended to be mutual between pair members.

Self-Disclosure in Isolation

Taylor, Altman and Sorrentino (1969) conducted a study utilizing 45 sailors. They communicated over an intercom system, with an experimenter. The purpose was to investigate the role of subjective expectancies associated with interpersonal rewards and costs on the growth of social relationships. It was found that the subjects with favorable interpersonal experiences talked about more aspects of themselves, spoke longer, and were more intimate than those in negative conditions.

Taking it even further, Altman and Haythorn (1965) explored interpersonal exchange in isolated and nonisolated groups. Nine dyads worked and lived in a small room for ten days, with no contact. Matched controls followed a similar schedule but had access to other people and outside facilities. The results gathered from self-disclosure questionnaires showed that isolates revealed more about intimate topics to their partners than did the controls.

In a study of social isolation, Altman, Taylor, and Wheeler (1973) utilized a group of 18 to 20-year-old sailors who had just completed recruit training. They were placed as dyads in experimental rooms which were 12 x 12 feet and contained a double bunk, table, two chairs, file cabinet, table lamp, refrigerator, chemical

toilet, and basic living supplies. The lights remained on at all times. In half the groups the subjects had separate rooms at their disposal; the other half lived in one room. They were further divided into stimulated and non-stimulated groups. The subjects in the non-stimulated condition did not hear another human voice except in two task situations. The stimulated subjects received verbal instruction, three broadcasts of music, verbal interviews, and news media.

After the isolation had begun, manipulations were performed as to length expectancy of the isolation; however, the planned duration of the experiment was eight days.

Questionnaires for measuring self-disclosure were administered before and after the experiment. The results indicated the subjects without stimulation exhibited increasingly greater amounts of disclosure than those with stimulation.

Research indicates that the social properties of the isolation situation tend to promote interpersonal exploration. The environmental stresses of isolation and confinement seem to accelerate interpersonal involvement. In isolation, the other person may become the richest and, perhaps, only varied source of stimulation. Interpersonal exchange (self-disclosure) is a way of passing time and generating a more enriched environment. Isolation requires the subjects to become totally involved with each

other's activities. They engage in the same routines of life (eating, sleeping, hygiene, sharing supplies and facilities, etc.) at the same time and conjointly.

In summarizing the review of the research findings, it was demonstrated that: (1) combinations of isolation yield varying degrees of stress which is a function of interpersonal needs; (2) developing congruence and real self-disclosure is essential to enduring long-term confinement; (3) varying degrees of physical isolation produce different levels of self-disclosure, the higher the degree of isolation the higher the level of self-disclosure; (4) the level of self-disclosure varies directly as the degree of mental isolation or the more the mental stimulation, the lower the level of self-disclosure; and (5) the level of self-disclosure is different for each individual and usually takes place on a mutual disclosure basis.

SUMMARY OF THE LITERATURE

A summary of the literature suggests that: (1) no matter where man is, he has certain basic needs which require satisfaction in order for him to survive; (2) man's survival requires a face-to-face interpersonal relationship with other human beings; (3) the interpersonal relationship must be growth promoting and to be so requires the participating parties be self-disclosing; (4) the level of self-disclosure varies for each individual; (5) isolation both physical and mental bear directly upon the

level of disclosure between persons in confinement; (6) the Vietnam POWs underwent varying conditions of isolation which required that they develop strong interpersonal relationships with fellow POWs; (7) the POWs' situation provides a unique condition for a study in self-disclosure, one which could not be duplicated in an experimental setting or laboratory; and (8) the current type of disclosure questionnaires used have adequate reliability and validity.

This concludes the review of literature related to the present study. The methods and procedures employed in the study are reported in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This chapter details the methods and procedures required to answer the question, "How did the level of self-disclosure relate to the degree of isolation among the Vietnam POWs?" The area specifically discussed will be the research approach and design employed; the method by which subjects were selected; a description of the instrumentation and associated procedures; the data collection process; recording and analysis techniques; the methodological assumptions employed; and the limitations of the research.

RESEARCH APPROACH

The research method used in this study was the correlational survey. (Fox 1969:46; Isaac and Michael, 1971:14). The correlational survey is designed to estimate the extent to which different variables are related to each other in the population of interest. (Fox, 1969: 428). This approach was selected because it permitted the determination of the relationship between the two variables of isolation and self-disclosure among the Vietnam POWs. In this research situation no previous baseline data were available. While baseline comparisons

would be useful, it was impractical to use multiple retrospective surveys. The duration of the prison experience was exceptionally long and recall of self-disclosure behavior prior to incarceration could hardly be considered reliable. In addition, comparisons were used to determine if there were any significant differences between the various isolation situations.

The major strength of the research approach is that if a high correlation occurs, the credibility of the hypotheses is strengthened in that they have survived a chance of disconfirmation. (Campbell and Stanley, 1963:64).

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design utilized in this study was a pre-experimental design as defined by Campbell and Stanley (1963:6). The design employed a single group to be studied after the treatment had been administered, the treatment being the POW experience in North Vietnam prison camps.

The symbolic model depicting the design is explained below:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Pretest</u>	<u>Treatment</u>	<u>Posttest</u>
E_R	.	(X)	0

E_R is the experimental group which was an invited sample of Vietnam POWs, randomly selected from the total

population of aircrews who were Vietnam POWs.

The treatment in the study is depicted by the parenthetical (X). The treatment X was the varying degrees of isolation for any duration in a North Vietnam POW camp, while the parentheses were added to indicate that the researcher had no control over the treatment, nor any influence over those selected for it.

The symbol 0 depicts the instrument used to gather the data to be assessed and will be discussed later.

According to Campbell and Stanley (1963:5-22) and Isaac and Michael (1971:21), the use of this design accrues the following additional strengths and advantages in terms of external and internal validity: (1) no interaction effect of pretesting and treatment; (2) the effect of statistical regression did not occur as subjects were not selected on the basis of any extreme test scores; and (3) the effect of history, maturation and testing were controlled but not measured.

HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses stated in the null form were:

H_{01} : There will be no significant correlation, at the .05 level of confidence, between the degree of physical isolation and level of self-disclosure among the Vietnam POWs as measured by the self-disclosure instrument.

H_{02} : There will be no significant difference, at the .05 level of confidence, in the level of self-disclosure

among the Vietnam POWs, with and without mental stimulation (mental isolation), as measured by the self-disclosure instrument.

SELECTION OF SUBJECTS

The universe of the subjects considered in this study was all aircrew members of the Navy, Marines and Air Force who flew combat missions in Southeast Asia during the period from August, 1964 through January, 1973. It was from this universe that the population, the Vietnam POWs, were randomly selected by the impersonal and inanimate object of enemy fire. A search of the literature and the researcher's personal knowledge of the circumstances leading to the shoot-down and capture of aircrews over North Vietnam does not indicate any difference between those aircrews shot down and captured, and those exposed to the same enemy fire but not shot down.

From the randomly selected population, who were Vietnam POWs, all were accessible and an invited sample of one hundred was selected using a table of random numbers. Through the randomized selection of both population and invited sample, all concerns of representativeness were satisfied and the generalization of findings to the universe justified. (Fox, 1969:322).

INSTRUMENTATION

A 45-item questionnaire was developed for measuring self-disclosure by selecting items from four self-disclosure

questionnaires presented by Jourard and others (1971) in the volume, Self-Disclosure: An Experimental Analysis of the Transparent Self. A copy of the questionnaire is located in Appendix A. The items were equally distributed between low, medium and high intimacy ratings.

The purpose of the questionnaire was to detect and measure the variations in levels of self-disclosure under various degrees of isolation, both mental and physical, among the Vietnam POWs.

The respondents were asked to indicate on a prepared answer sheet (Appendix B) their: (1) total number of months as a POW; (2) total number of months solo (living alone); (3) branch of the service; (4) present age; and (5) marital status at the time of shoot-down. The answer sheet was further broken down into two main categories of non-stimulated condition A and stimulated condition B (without and with books, educational programs, cards, games or study material available, respectively). Below each of these two stimulation conditions, five situations as to number of roommates were depicted (i.e., solo, 1-3, 4-6, 7-10 and 11 plus). Under each of the situations applicable to the respondent, he was instructed to circle one of five numbers ranging from 1 to 5 which signified levels of disclosure. The number 1 being, "did not discuss it," to 5 being, "discussed it in detail."

Jourard's (1971) book, Self-Disclosure: An Experimental Analysis of the Transparent Self, presented

evidence that the self-disclosure tests from which the investigator selected his items have "construct" and "concurrent" validity. The book also indicated the reliability coefficients for the questionnaires from which the items were drawn had been determined by odd-even reliability to range from .85 to the low .90's.

In conjunction with construction of the instrument, steps were taken to establish reliability and face validity. Data were obtained by means of a field test using a small sample of locally-based Vietnam POWs who were included in the population. This procedure utilized a test-retest approach with at least ten days' delay before administering the retest. During the first test, reactions and suggestions as to changes were solicited. Judgements concerning content validity and relevance of the instrument were obtained from faculty members of United States International University, San Diego, California, and the staff of the Center for Prisoner of War Studies.

DATA COLLECTION AND RECORDING

The instrument was packaged into one envelope and mailed to the respondents. A letter of introduction and transmittal and a set of written standardized instructions were included in each package.

The letter of transmittal provided an explanation of the purpose of the study and the planned use of the data to be obtained. The respondents were advised there

were no right or wrong answers, and that the return of their questionnaires through a United States International University professor as a third person would insure their anonymity.

A deadline for completion was established in the letter of transmittal and 100 packages were mailed. Sixty percent had been returned by the deadline date and data analysis was commenced. An additional 10 percent of the packages were received after the deadline, and 30 percent were not returned.

DATA ANALYSIS

The statistical techniques utilized in this study to analyze the data were a series of correlational and t-test analyses to determine the relationship between isolation and self-disclosure. Among the techniques were the Pearson Product-Moment correlation and the one-tailed t-test. Group responses in each of the 10 possible roommate situations, under two conditions of stimulation, were compared to determine if a significant difference in level of self-disclosure existed between situations and/or stimulation conditions. Pearson Product-Moment correlations were computed in each stimulation condition to determine if there was a correlation between self-disclosure and degree of isolation, both physical and mental.

METHODOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Several assumptions were made in regards to the research methodology. These assumptions were: (1) the subjects sampled were not biased and were representative of the population; (2) the instrument utilized to obtain the data was valid; (3) the responses were meaningful; (4) the retrospective perceptions and recall of the POWs were accurate; and (5) the data analysis techniques were valid.

The historical nature of the study imposed a few limitations on the study. The particular research design employed and the method of data collection were the most feasible; however, there were several drawbacks (Campbell and Stanley, 1963:6; Isaac and Michael, 1971:21-23): (1) no baseline data were available; (2) no control by the experimenter over the overall treatment (the degree to which isolated and the length of isolation varied for each POW); (3) the use of a mailed questionnaire required by circumstances could have seriously affected the research through mortality (to overcome this possibility, the invited sample was made large); and (4) the possibility of misplaced precision exist.

In truth, the developed instrument did collect reliable data sufficient to make a determination as to the effect various degrees of physical isolation and stimulation had on self-disclosure.

Chapter 4

FINDINGS

Data were collected and analyzed for the purpose of determining the effect of isolation, both physical and mental, on the level of self-disclosure among the Vietnam POWs. This chapter reports the findings of the study as they related to the research hypotheses. Tables and a graph are included to assist the reader in understanding the analysis and results. This chapter includes a description of the sample, and questionnaire data which includes the processing and analysis of the data to examine the effects of physical isolation and mental stimulation upon disclosure levels.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

The questionnaire developed by the researcher was mailed to 100 randomly selected Vietnam POWs who were the experimental group. At the pre-established deadline date, 60 percent of the questionnaires had been returned and were utilized as respondents for the study. An additional five percent were received after the deadline, but were not used in the study, and five percent were returned by the respondents unanswered. The remaining 30 percent were unaccounted for.

Table 1 provides a group summary of the respondents

Table 1
Descriptive Data for the 60 POW Respondents

Age		Confinement				Service ^a			Marital Status		
in Years		in Months		Solo							
Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	AF	Na	MC	Married	Single	Divorced
37.6	27-52	58.3	7-102	7.74	0-49	27	30	2	49	8	2

^aAF = Air Force, Na = Navy, MC = Marine Corps.

as to present age, length of confinement, service affiliation, and marital status at time of shoot-down.

It may be observed from Table 1 that the ages of the respondents varied from 27 to 52 years. The number of months confined ranged from seven to 102 and the number of months solo was from zero to 46. Three services (Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force) were represented, as were the various marital statuses.

QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

This section is concerned with the processing of the data which were gathered by the researcher-developed instrument. Except for the scoring of the answer sheet, all data were processed and analyzed by use of a computer.

Scoring the Instrument

Each of the items on the questionnaire was assigned a numerical value of 1, 2, or 3, which corresponded to its level of intimacy of either low, medium, or high respectively (see Appendix A). This value was multiplied by the disclosure level (1 through 5) which the subject had indicated for the item under a particular roommate situation on the answer sheet (Appendix B). This procedure provided a numerical disclosure level for the item. The individual self-disclosure levels for each of the 45 items under a particular roommate situation were summed to obtain a total numerical self-disclosure score for that particular situation. This was done for

each of the roommate situations responded to by the subject.

The minimum and maximum self-disclosure scores possible for any one item was 1 to 5 for low, 2-10 for medium, and 3-15 for high intimacy values. The sum total self-disclosure score (level) for any one roommate situation could vary from a minimum of 90 to a maximum of 450.

The researcher hand scored each of the answer sheets. The experimental group mean score, range, and standard deviation for each of the five roommate situations under the two stimulation conditions (Nonstimulated Condition A and Stimulated Condition B) were computed. The results are tabulated in Table 2 and graphically presented in Figure 1.

Table 2 and Figure 1 reveal marked differences between mean disclosure levels (99.4 and 104.5) for solo and all other roommate situations (208.4 to 273.4) under both stimulation conditions. In addition a general decrease in mean disclosure level (273.4 to 225.0) with an increase in number of roommates (1-3 to 11+) under Non-stimulated Condition was noted. This change was not as pronounced (221.1 to 211.7) under Stimulated Condition B. The table also depicts a wide range of individual subject self-disclosure levels for each roommate situation. The ranges associated with each mean vary from a low of 48 points to a high of 330 points.

Table 2

Mean Disclosure Scores on the Research Questionnaire
by Number of Roommates Under Two Conditions
of Stimulation

Number of Roommates	N	Mean	Range	Standard Deviation
<u>Nonstimulated Condition A</u>				
Solo	45	104.5	90-210	24.9
1-3	49	273.4	100-430	86.5
4-6	25	265.2	111-416	80.1
7-10	25	235.8	115-347	66.9
11+	28	225.0	115-347	63.7
<u>Stimulated Condition B</u>				
Solo	9	99.4	90-138	15.8
1-3	14	221.1	108-387	65.5
4-6	25	214.5	116-337	59.2
7-10	27	208.4	112-330	53.3
11+	55	211.7	118-333	53.4

N = number of respondents in each roommate situation.

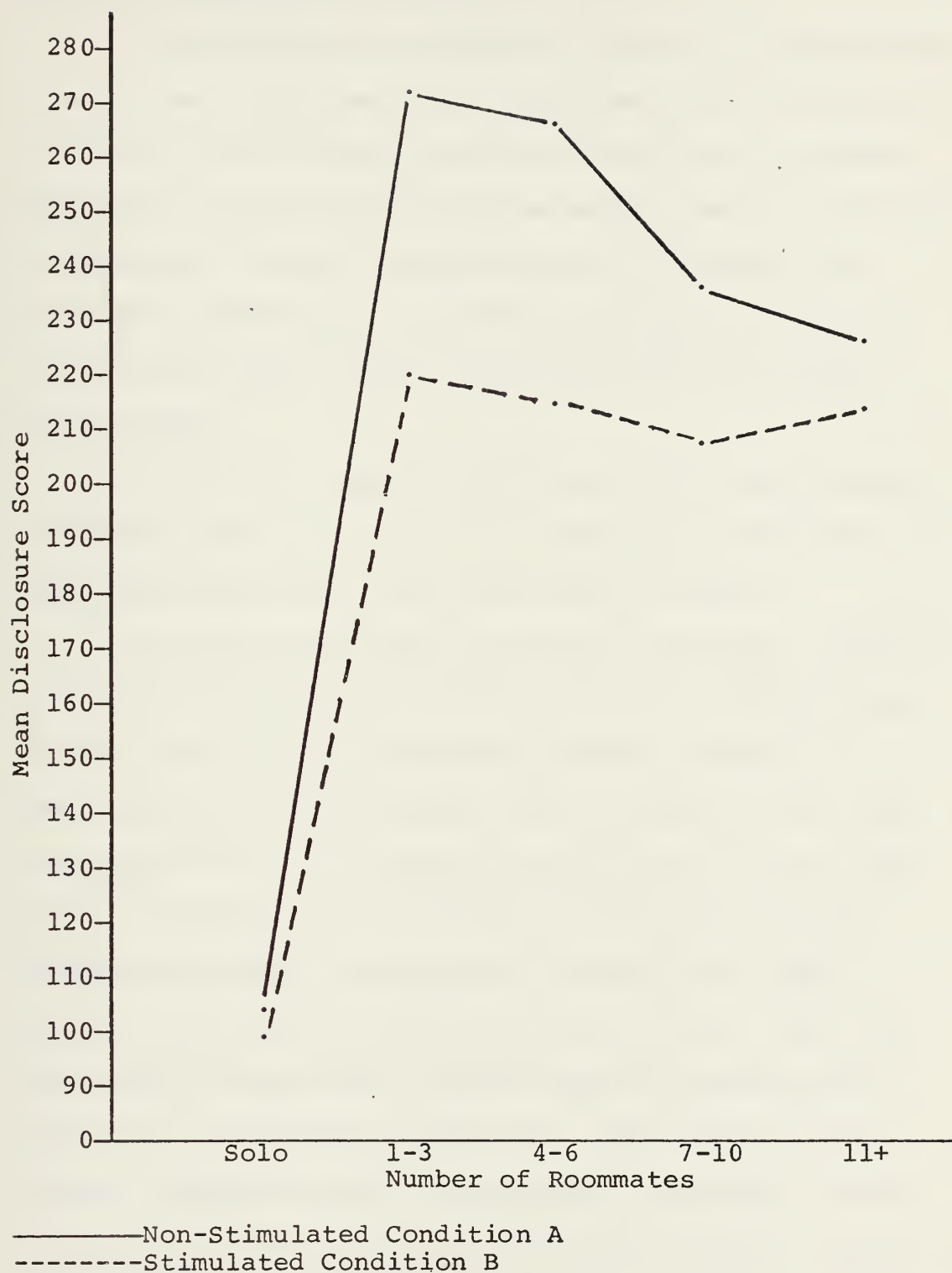


Figure 1. Profile of Mean Disclosure Scores by Number of Roommates Under Two Conditions of Stimulation

Effects of Physical Isolation
Under Nonstimulated Condition A

To determine the effects of physical isolation on level of self-disclosure under Nonstimulated Condition A, a series of one-tailed t-tests was performed to examine differences in self-disclosure between roommate situations. In addition a Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was performed comparing the variables of degree of physical isolation and level of self-disclosure for the experimental group.

The t-test comparisons between the five roommate situations (solo, 1-3, 4-6, 7-10, and 11+) under Non-stimulated Condition A are presented in Table 3.

The data presented in Table 3 show that a significant difference beyond the .05 level of confidence was found to exist in all but three adjacent roommate comparisons (i.e., 1-3 versus 4-6, 4-6 versus 7-10, and 7-10 versus 11+). Of special interest are the very high t-values (9.65 to 13.09) which resulted when the solo roommate situation was compared with the four other roommate situations (1-3, 4-6, 7-10, and 11+). All the comparisons between solo and the other situations were found to be significant beyond the .0001 level of confidence, indicating that the observed increases in self-disclosure for the non-solo situations could not readily be explained due to chance factors.

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation between the variables of degree of physical isolation as measured by

Table 3

Report of t-Values for Differences in Mean Disclosure
Scores Between the Various Roommate Situations
Under Nonstimulated Condition A

Number of Roommates	Solo	1-3	4-6	7-10	11+
Solo	X	13.09 ^a	9.78 ^a	9.46 ^a	9.56 ^a
1-3		X	-.310	-1.93 ^b	-2.81 ^c
4-6			X	-1.41	-2.01 ^b
7-10				X	-.604
11+					X

^a $p < .0001$

^b $p < .05$

^c $p < .025$

number of roommates and level of self-disclosure for Nonstimulated Condition A was computed. However, since it was shown by previous analysis (Table 2 and Figure 1) that the solo roommate situation precipitated only negligible disclosure, it was eliminated from the correlation analysis in order to produce a more useful analysis. The correlation coefficient computed on this basis was found to be $-.26$ which, with 126 degrees of freedom, was found to be significant at the $.01$ level of confidence, indicating that increases in the number of roommates were associated with decreases in disclosure levels.

Effects of Physical Isolation Under Stimulation Condition B

To determine the effects of physical isolation on the level of self-disclosure under Stimulated Condition B, a series of one-tailed t-tests was performed to examine differences in self-disclosure between roommate situations. In addition, a Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was performed comparing the variables of degree of physical isolation and level of self-disclosure for the experimental group.

The t-test comparisons between the five roommate situations (solo, 1-3, 4-6, 7-10, and 11+) under Stimulated Condition B are presented in Table 4.

It may be observed from Table 4 that a statistically significant difference beyond the $.05$ level of confidence was found to exist only for the comparisons of

Table 4

Report of t-Values for Differences in Mean Disclosure
Scores Between the Various Roommate Situations
Under Stimulated Condition B

Number of Roommates	Solo	1-3	4-6	7-10	11+
Solo	X	6.66 ^a	8.88 ^a	9.45 ^a	12.59 ^a
1-3		X	-.310	-.626	-.494
4-6			X	-.393	-.201
7-10				X	-.268
11+					X

^a $p < .0001$

solo versus roommate situations 1-3, 4-6, 7-10, and 11+. These differences were significant well beyond the .0001 level of confidence, indicating that the observed increases in self-disclosure for the non-solo situations could not readily be explained due to chance factors.

A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation calculation similar to the one performed for the Nonstimulated Condition A was done for the Stimulated Condition B. This computation resulted in a correlation coefficient of $-.04$ which, with 121 degrees of freedom, was found to be not significant.

Effects of Mental Stimulation

In order to examine the effects of mental stimulation on levels of self-disclosure, comparisons were made between mean disclosure scores under Nonstimulated Condition A and Stimulated Condition B. The obtained t -values are reported in Table 5. The mean scores upon which the t -values are based were reported previously in Table 2. A positive t -value indicates a higher level of self-disclosure under Nonstimulated Condition A than under Stimulated Condition B. In each comparison the t -value was positive and two of the comparisons (1-3 and 4-6) were statistically significant beyond the .05 level. One comparison (7-10) approached significance at the .05 level of confidence.

In order to consider the overall difference in disclosure scores between Nonstimulated Condition A and

Table 5

Report of t-Values for Differences in Mean Disclosure Scores Between Like Roommate Situations Under Nonstimulated Condition A and Stimulated Condition B

Number of Roommates		Stimulated Condition B				
		Solo	1-3	4-6	7-10	11+
Nonstimulated Condition A	Solo	.780				
	1-3		2.44 ^a			
	4-6			2.53 ^a		
	7-10				1.63	
	11+					.943

^a $p < .05$

Table 6

Mean Total Disclosure Scores Under Nonstimulated Condition A and Stimulated Condition B

Condition	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-score
A	55	678.0	310.1	4.13 ^a
B	58	460.8	242.1	

^a $p < .0001$

Stimulated Condition B, an additional comparison was made by summing disclosure scores across all roommate situations for both Stimulation Conditions and making a comparison between the two mean disclosure scores thus obtained. The data for this comparison are presented in Table 6.

The total mean disclosure score under Nonstimulated Condition A was found to be 678.0, while the total score for Stimulated Condition B was only 460.8. This difference was found to be significant beyond the .0001 level of confidence, indicating that the POWs who experienced less mental stimulation engaged in higher levels of self-disclosure.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of isolation, both physical and mental, on the self-disclosure levels of the Vietnam POWs. An experimental group was established by using an invited sample randomly selected from among the aircrew members which made up the population of Vietnam POWs. A questionnaire was developed by the researcher and mailed to the invited sample of 100 Vietnam POWs. The first 60 respondents were utilized for the conduct of the study.

There was more than sufficient literature available which bore directly upon the various aspects of the study. The main problem encountered was the locating of an instrument which would fulfill the requirements of the study. Since the researcher was unable to locate a suitable instrument, he turned to Jourard, who was one of the leading researchers and authorities in the area of interest. By selecting portions of several already developed instruments the researcher was able to develop an instrument which would meet the purpose of the study.

The data were analyzed using one-tailed t-test comparisons and Pearson Product-Moment Correlations to determine if the results supported the basic hypotheses

of the study. The results of these statistical tests were as follows:

1. Significant differences were found between the mean self-disclosure scores and the number of roommates under Nonstimulated Condition A, indicating that as the number of roommates increased, the level of self-disclosure decreased.

2. The correlations showed a significant difference from zero existed between the level of self-disclosure and degree of physical isolation under Nonstimulated Condition A, indicating that increases in the number of roommates were associated with decreases in disclosure levels.

3. Significant differences were found between the mean self-disclosure scores under Nonstimulated Condition A and Stimulated Condition B, indicating that the addition of mental stimulants reduces the level of self-disclosure.

4. The disclosure scores for the solo roommate situations were significantly lower than for all other situations. The comparisons between solo and all other roommate situations in both the nonstimulated and stimulated conditions were found to be significant beyond the .0001 level of confidence.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis and findings of the research data, it can be concluded that:

1. The first research hypothesis, that there would

be no significant difference between degree of physical isolation and level of self-disclosure among the Vietnam POWs, was rejected at the .05 level of confidence. The comparison and analysis of the research data for the experimental group revealed that a statistically significant difference existed between the number of roommates and level of self-disclosure. An increase in the number of roommates was associated with a decrease in the level of self-disclosure.

2. The second research hypothesis, that there would be no significant difference in level of self-disclosure between the nonstimulated and stimulated conditions of isolation, was rejected at the .05 level of confidence. The comparison and analysis of the research data revealed a statistically significant difference between the nonstimulated and stimulated conditions.

3. It can also be concluded that face-to-face confrontation was essential in the development of any significant level of self-disclosure among the Vietnam POWs.

DISCUSSION

This section will be concerned with providing an interpretation of the findings and conclusions of the study. Aspects related to the review of related literature are also pointed out.

Haythorn, Altman, and Myers (1966) showed that

social isolation is highly stress producing and satisfying the needs of man reduces the stress. It was felt that the POW environment would be highly conducive to promoting stresses and in order to have survived the extremely long period of isolation the Vietnam POW must have satisfied certain of his needs, of which an interpersonal relationship would be one.

The extremely low self-disclosure level of the solo roommate situations and extremely high significant differences indicated when compared to all other roommate situations supports Newcomb's (1961) viewpoint that face-to-face encounter (confrontation) is essential for the development and growth of an interpersonal relationship. They, also, highlight the basic need man has to be with others (belong) as developed by Maslow (1954) and Jourard (1958).

The very nature of the relationship among the Vietnam POWs imposed by the conditions of isolation would tend to be a powerful determinant in the development as put forward by Jourard (1971).

The wide range of individual disclosure scores indicated on the research questionnaires supported the findings reported by Jourard (1964) and research done by Altman and others (1967, 1971, 1973), that every individual would reveal himself differently and at different levels under various conditions of social isolation.

Pearce and Sharp (1973) pointed out that the length of time spent together would account partially for the various levels of self-disclosure. However, the length of time which the Vietnam POWs had spent together under the various roommate situations was of more than sufficient duration. That is, it was not considered to have been a contributing factor in the differences noted in self-disclosure levels under the various roommate situations as reported by the Vietnam POWs.

Numerous studies reported in Chapter 2 were supported by the findings of this study. Namely: (1) the level of self-disclosure varied directly with the degree of physical isolation; (2) the addition of mental stimulation (reduced mental isolation) significantly lowered the level of self-disclosure; and (3) the highest level of self-disclosure was associated with a high level of physical isolation (not solo) and no mental stimulation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Only those aspects of the data gathered by the research instrument bearing directly upon the research hypotheses were analyzed. This analysis was an evaluation of the relationships between level of self-disclosure and degree of physical isolation, and level of self-disclosure and mental isolation. The data, however, could provide a basis for further studies in the area of self-disclosure utilizing other variables such as age, marital status,

length of time as a POW, etc.

The majority of studies conducted to investigate the effects of social isolation utilized dyads. It is felt that a more detailed study of the relationship between specific numbers of roommates and levels of self-disclosure would be productive. There appears to be a point at which the number of roommates is no longer significant in influencing levels of self-disclosure.

Future work needs to focus on developing a standardized self-disclosure instrument which would meet the needs of a wide variety of studies. In this study the scoring system for the self-disclosure instrument was devised subjectively by the investigator. In the research on self-disclosure reviewed in Chapter 2, the majority of the studies utilized questionnaires constructed for the particular study involved.

The relationship between self-disclosure and health, both psychological and physiological, remains open for continued investigations.

Jourard (1964, 1971) pointed out that self-disclosure is an aspect of that entity called "self." What "self" is, and the myriad processes which operate within it, have intrigued men for centuries, at least since the time of Aristotle and possibly even before. There is little doubt that "self" will continue to stimulate thought and study for years to come.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE FOR
EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Appendix A

LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE FOR
EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

United States International University

School of Human Behavior
CDR Paul SCHULZ

1 July 1974

Dear Shipmate:

I realize that you have been on the receiving end of numerous questionnaires and answered many questions verbally, as I have. I am sure, however, that you will agree any research effort that recovers and sheds light on the history of the Vietnam POWs serves a useful purpose.

I am currently in the third quarter of a four-quarter Master's program at USIU and with your help I will finish this December. The main thrust of my master's thesis is an investigation into the types of things discussed and to what extent under varying conditions of isolation. I would greatly appreciate your taking a few minutes of your valuable time in assisting me. Your response will be considered not as an individual but as part of a group.

I request that you do not write your name on the answer sheet or questionnaire. Please record your answers directly on the special answer sheet provided. When finished, please return the whole package in the enclosed manila envelope. You will note that it is self-addressed to the University, who will open it before returning the contents to me. This is a final safeguard to protect your anonymity.

If you desire and time permits me, I shall furnish you with significant results of the study. Furthermore, a copy of the thesis and all gathered data will be turned over to the Center for Prisoner of War Studies. As time is a factor, I will greatly appreciate your prompt response, within one week if possible, but no later than 15 July 1974. If you object to any or all of the questions please leave blank but return the package.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. My prayers are for your continued success and good health. I hope that your past year has been as great as mine. God bless you.

Paul SCHULZ
CDR USN
(Student!)

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions

There is a list of items below that pertains to you. You have also been provided with a special answer sheet. The answer sheet is broken down into Conditions A and B. Under each condition several roommate situations are listed. Condition A refers to a situation where "Books, educational programs, games, cards and study material are NOT available," and B refers to "Books, educational programs, cards, games or study material ARE available." The solo situation refers to your living alone but having communications with other POWs.

Please indicate on the answer sheet under each of the situations applicable to you, the extent to which you discussed the listed item with your fellow roommate(s). It is possible to have been in each of the ten situations at some time during your period of confinement and to have experienced the same situation more than once. Circle the appropriate number on a scale from 1-5; one (1) being, "I did not discuss the item," and five (5) being, "I discussed the item in detail with my roommate(s)." If you experienced the same situation more than once, mark only the highest level of discussion.

As an example, I was shot down in late 1967 and experienced both Conditions A and B. Under Condition A, I was in roommate situations of solo, 1-3, 7-10, and 11 plus. While under Condition B, I experienced roommate situations 4-6, 7-10, and 11 plus. I would indicate my answer to Item 1, "Did you discuss your hobbies; how you best like to spend your spare time?" as follows:

During Condition A, while solo, I had limited communications and discussed the item very little, thus I marked 2. I lived with from 1-3 roommates on three different occasions and discussed the item at different depths but the highest level was 5. With 7-10, 11 plus and under Condition B, 4-6 and 7-10, I did not discuss it in as much detail, thus I marked 4. Whereas in B with 11 plus it was discussed even less, thus I marked 3.

CONDITION A

Books, educational programs,
cards, games or study material
NOT available.

Number of Roommates				
solo	1-3	4-6	7-10	11+
12345	12345	12345	12345	12345

CONDITION B

Books, educational programs,
cards, games or study material
ARE available.

Number of Roommates				
solo	1-3	4-6	7-10	11+
12345	12345	12345	12345	12345

If the results are to be meaningful and of value, it is necessary for you to give your best answer to each item. There are no right or wrong answers, no grade, and no value judgement to be made. NO attempt will ever be made to identify individuals. Your anonymity is guaranteed.

Items

1. Did you discuss your hobbies; how you best like to spend your spare time? (L)
2. Did you discuss your feelings about how parents ought to deal with children? (M)
3. Did you discuss your ambitions and goals in your work? (M)
4. Did you discuss your favorite foods and beverages? (L)
5. Did you discuss why some people dislike you? (H)
6. Did you discuss your feelings about how capable and smart you are compared to others around you? (H)
7. Did you discuss your preferences and dislikes in music? (L)
8. Did you discuss what you regard as mistakes and failures your parents made in raising you? (M)
9. Did you discuss the things in your past about which you are most ashamed? (H)
10. Did you discuss your views on racial problems? (M)
11. Did you discuss your personal views on politics, the president, foreign and domestic policy? (L)
12. Did you discuss how much money you make and how? (M)
13. Did you discuss how much you care about what others think of you? (H)
14. Did you discuss your personal views on sexual morality--how you feel you and others should behave in sexual matters? (M)
15. Did you discuss your personal religious views and nature of your religious participation if any? (L)
16. Did you discuss the aspects of your personality that you dislike, worry about or consider a handicap to you? (H)
17. Did you discuss your views on the way a husband and wife should live their marriage? (L)

18. Did you discuss the unhappiest moments in your life? (M)
19. Did you discuss how you feel about engaging in sex activities prior to, or outside of marriage? (H)
20. Did you discuss the type of literature that interests you most? (L)
21. Did you discuss the extent of travelling you have done or hope to do? (L)
22. Did you discuss how frequently you like to engage in sexual activity? (H)
23. Did you discuss any disappointments you have experienced with the opposite sex? (H)
24. Did you discuss the radio and television programs that interest you? (L)
25. Did you discuss your favorite forms of exotic play and sexual love making? (H)
26. Did you discuss the kind of behavior in others that most annoys you or makes you furious? (M)
27. Did you discuss questions in the areas of sex you are most curious about? (H)
28. Did you discuss how you budget money in detail? (M)
29. Did you discuss the characteristics of your parents you dislike? (H)
30. Did you discuss whether or not you do anything special to maintain or improve your appearance, e.g., diet, exercise, etc.? (M)
31. Did you discuss how many brothers and sisters you have? (L)
32. Did you discuss your favorite type and style of clothing? (L)
33. Did you discuss how you feel about your love life? (H)
34. Did you discuss the techniques of sex play you know of? (H)
35. Did you discuss your past record of illness and treatment? (M)

36. Did you discuss the occasions in your life in which you were happiest? (M)
37. Did you discuss what your favorite sports were? (L)
38. Did you discuss the facts of your past sex life in detail? (H)
39. Did you discuss how important you felt education is to a person? (L)
40. Did you discuss what particularly annoys you about your closest friend of the opposite sex or (if married) your wife? (H)
41. Did you discuss your feelings about the use of drugs? (M)
42. Did you discuss the subjects you most liked or disliked in school? (L)
43. Did you discuss the feelings you have the most trouble controlling? (H)
44. Did you discuss your favorite jokes and the types you like to hear? (L)
45. Did you discuss the possessions you are most proud of and take the greatest care of, e.g., boat, stereo, plane, etc.? (M)

Appendix B

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE ANSWER SHEET

Appendix B

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE ANSWER SHEET

1. Total number of months as a POW_____.
2. Total number of months solo_____.
3. Branch of service_____.
4. Present age_____.
5. At time of shootdown: Married / Single / Divorced?
(circle one)

Condition A

Books, educational programs,
cards, games or study material
NOT available.

Condition B

Books, educational programs,
cards, games or study material
ARE available.

Number of Roommates						Number of Roommates					
	solo	1-3	4-6	7-10	11+		solo	1-3	4-6	7-10	11+
1.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
2.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
3.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
4.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
5.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
6.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
7.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
8.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
9.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
10.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
11.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
12.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
13.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
14.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
15.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
16.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
17.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
18.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
19.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345
20.	12345	12345	12345	12345	12345		12345	12345	12345	12345	12345

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